

Scandal by Officials of Doordarshan

1600. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether CBI has been inquiring about an alleged unscheduled visit made by Doordarshan officials to the Island in 1997-98, as reported in the Hindustan Times, dated 2nd June, 2001;

(b) if so, the details of the scandal made by the officials of the Doordarshan; and

(c) the action Government propose to take against the officials involved in the scandal?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Payment of advertisement bills by DAVP

1601. SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMED KHAN (DURRU): Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of advertisement bills payable by DAVP to the newspapers and periodicals till 31st March, 2001; and

(b) the reasons for delaying or for not making the payments?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) As on 31.03.2001, bills amounting to Rs. 7,94,68,791/- only were pending with the Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity (DAVP) for payment.

(b) The clearance of bills is a continuous process. One of the reasons for delaying/not making payments is due to non-availability of funds from client Ministries/Departments.

Dropping of DD Educational Programmes

1602. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any move on the part of Doordarshan to delete educational programmes, such as UGC, IGNOU etc.;

(b) whether Government have been asked to constitute an independent regulator for airwaves by any judgement;

(c) whether Government have constituted the same;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) It has been intimated by Prasar Bharati that Doordarshan has undertaken a restructuring exercise of its programming on DD-National Channel, with a view to meeting its mandate as a Public Service Broadcaster and to ensure that it is in a position to generate revenue to gradually become self-supporting. They are, discussing with the Ministry of Human Resource Development, the future telecast arrangements of educational programmes of "Gyan-Darshan" Channel produced by various agencies like UGC, IGNOU, CIET etc.

(b) The Supreme Court in their Judgement dated 9.2.95 in the case of Union of India Vs. Cricket Association of Bengal had asked the Government to establish an independent autonomous public authority, representative of all sections and interests in the society, to control and regulate the use of the airwaves.

(c) to (e) To set up an autonomous Broadcasting Authority for facilitating and regulating broadcasting services in the country, the Broadcasting Bill, 1997, was introduced in Parliament on 16.5.97. The Bill was referred to a Joint Parliamentary Committee but before the JPC could finalize its report, the Parliament was dissolved and consequently the Bill lapsed. The Group of Ministers on Telecom and IT Convergence is now considering a draft statute which will regulate the Telecommunication, Broadcasting and Multimedia.

Launching of Educational FM Radio Network

1603. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have proposed to launch the educational FM Radio Network of India;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the cities where it would be started in the near future and when it is likely to be started?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) and (b) The Indira Gandhi National